CISPUS VALLEY BRIDGE
(Forest Service Building No. 2306-3.6)
Guilford Pinchot National Forest
Randle
Lewis County
Washington

HAER No. WA-65

HAER
WASH
21-RAND,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

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Cispus Valley Bridge
(Forest Service Bridge No. 2306-3.6)

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Location:	Spanning Cispus River at Forest Service Road 2306 Randle, Lewis County, Washington UTM: Zone 10 Easting 587320 Northing 5144160 T11N R8E, Sec. 18, 1/4,1/4,1/4 NW, 1/4,1/4 NW, 1/4 NW Quad: Tower Rock
Date of Construction:	1939
Type of Structure:	Wooden Howe truss bridge, 200-foot span
Designer/Engineer:	Region Six Forest Service U.S. Department of Agriculture
Fabricator/Builder:	Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) under U.S. Forest Service supervision
Present Owner:	Gifford Pinchot National Forest, U.S. Department of Agriculture
Present Use:	Vehicular hridge, now closed
Significance:	The planning of the Cispus Valley Bridge illustrates the cooperation hetween the U.S. Forest Service and local governments that developed during the Great Depression. Construction of the hridge linked three significant participants in local, regional and national history: Lewis County, the Forest Service, and the Civilian Conservation Corps, which provided the labor as part of a Depression-era program to provide work for the jobless. Cispus Valley Bridge may be the longest single-span wooden bridge in the State of Washington (200 feet).
Project Information:	Documentation of Cispus Valley Bridge was conducted during the summer of 1992 under the co-sponsorship of HABS/HAER and Gifford Pinchot National Forest. This data was authored hy Gifford Pinchot National Forest personnel.

INTRODUCTION

The Cispus Valley Bridge was constructed in 1939 by Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) personnel under the supervision of the U.S. Forest Service. The bridge was designed and built as part of an overall transportation plan to provide better vehicular access to the southern part of the Randle Ranger District, Gifford Pinchot National Forest, and Lewis County. Its construction was characteristic of the evolution of the Forest Service from simply a caretaker of the national forests to a proactive agency facilitating the exploitation, protection and overall management of the resources contained within the forests. This evolution occurred concurrently with, and was partially the result of, the Federal Government's response to the Great Depression. The CCC provided the labor for the Forest Service to build an infrastructure of administration, transportation and recreation facilities. The planning and construction of the bridge also illustrates the close cooperation between the Forest Service and local governments that developed at this time. The federal money and labor made available by the Emergency Conservation Work Act in addition to concomitant legislation executive orders, provided rural counties with resources for road improvements at levels far above those available locally. The Cispus Valley Bridge was built under the terms of a contract executed between the Pacific Northwest Region of the Forest Service and Lewis County, that was signed in 1938.

CULTURAL MATERIALS AND FEATURES

The Cispus Valley Bridge exhibits severally historically notable features. Its relatively narrow trestle and truss construction anchored by two poured concrete piers is very typical of early twentieth century bridge-building. The length of the main truss, which free-spans 200 feet, makes it one of the longest single span wooden bridge trusses in Washington. The use of a standard Howe truss, which reflects a trend toward prefabrication and away from the use of locally available materials. No detailed engineering plans of the truss were prepared by the Forest Service prior to construction. In contrast, the approach trestles and piers were all detailed. This strongly suggests that the truss was "factory" assembled, dismantled and then reassembled on site. The timbers used in the truss were pressure-treated, again reflecting the trend away from the use of local materials in the late-CCC period.

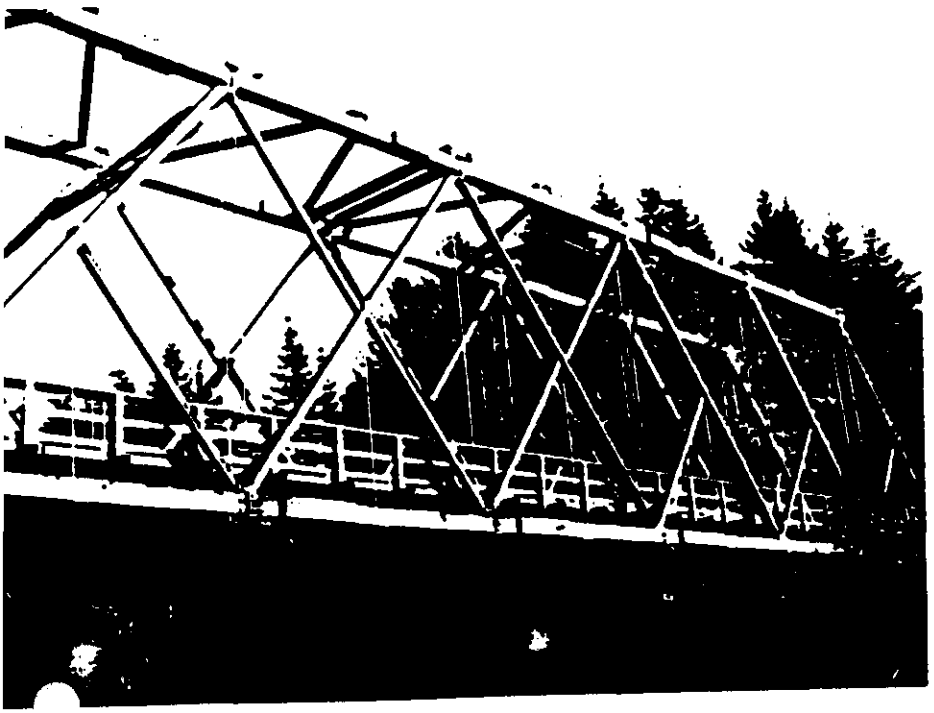
CONDITION

The bridge was closed in April 1990, as the result of a detailed conditional analysis (records on file at the Gifford Pinchot National Forest supervisor's office). Inspection of the bridge revealed significant deterioration of the load-bearing members of the main truss and the approach trestles. Standing water on the bridge deck and the activities of assorted flora add to the decay process. The bridge is currently intact but, without maintenance, its future integrity is questionable.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Cispus Valley Bridge appears to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places on the basis of Criteria A, "...[association] with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;..." (36 CFR 60.4). Planning and construction of the bridge linked three

significant participants in local, regional and national history; Lewis County, the Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps. Lewis County fulfilled title and easement requirements as well as providing most of the benefiting population. The Forest Service provided the engineering and supervisory expertise. The CCC provided the labor and transportation. Depression-era projects as exemplified by the Cispus Valley Bridge are an important part of the nation's historic fabric.



Main truss - west elevation (1988)

Concrete pier (1972)

Northern bridge approach (1951)
(earliest available photograph)